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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3866th meeting of the Security Council, held on 25 March 1998, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The question concerning Haiti", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council recalls its resolution 1141 (1997) of 28 November 1997 and welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH) of 20 February 1998 (S/1998/144).

"The Security Council commends the achievements of the Secretary-General's Representative in Haiti, the United Nations staff, and the MIPONUH civilian police officers in Haiti. It notes with appreciation the important contributions made by the United Nations Development Programme and the International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH).

"The Security Council welcomes the progress made by the Haitian people towards the establishment of a durable democratic and constitutional system. It also welcomes the sustained improvement in security and stability in Haiti. The Security Council agrees with the Secretary-General in his assessment of the Haitian National Police (HNP) as expressed in his recent report (S/1998/144). It also welcomes the significant progress made by the HNP as mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General and expresses confidence that MIPONUH's activities will continue to build on the achievements of previous United Nations missions in Haiti and to further the professional development of the HNP. The Security Council expresses the hope that HNP achievements will be matched by progress in other areas, including the development of a functioning judicial system, and in this regard, recognizes the importance of judicial reform.

"The Security Council reaffirms that further assistance to the Haitian National Police, should it be needed, should be provided with the full support of the international community through United Nations specialized agencies and programmes, and through international and regional organizations and by interested Member States.

"The Security Council reaffirms also that the people and Government of Haiti bear the ultimate responsibility for national reconciliation, the maintenance of a secure and stable environment, the administration of justice, and the reconstruction of their country. It emphasizes the importance of Haiti's continuing to settle its contentious issues peacefully and democratically. It expresses the view that a prompt solution of these issues in Haiti will facilitate economic development and the provision of international assistance. It fully supports the Secretary-General's appeal to Haitian authorities and political leaders to resolve Haiti's political impasse so the country can move forward and welcomes current efforts undertaken to this end.

"The Security Council stresses that it is of the utmost importance that the next parliamentary and local elections in Haiti be conducted in a free, fair and transparent manner in order to allow the broadest possible voter participation, consistent with Haitian law. It notes that a substantial effort will be required to ensure the success of these vitally important elections. The Security Council looks forward to the steps taken by the Government of Haiti in this regard and urges the international community to be ready to provide electoral assistance as may be requested.

"The Security Council recognizes that economic rehabilitation and reconstruction constitute the major tasks facing the Haitian Government and people and stresses that a sustained commitment by the international community and the international financial institutions, as well as the relevant United Nations bodies, to assist and support the economic, social and institutional development in Haiti is indispensable for long-term sustainable development in the country. It commends the efforts of those organizations and countries currently involved in meeting these needs and encourages them to coordinate their activities.

"The Security Council will remain seized of this matter."